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The Reality of Life :

A

DISCOURSE

TO

THE GRADUATING CLASS

OF

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE.

GETTYSBURG, SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1853.

BY H. L. BAUGHER, D. D.

Published by the Class.

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DISCOURSE.

PROV. 12 : 28. "*In the way of righteousness is life.*"

THE wisest of beings was asked the question, under the most solemn circumstances, "what is truth?" His interrogator, presuming the question too difficult to be met by a satisfactory reply, did not wait for an answer. When the question is asked, what is life, the same difficulty presents itself, because life seems to be viewed by every one in a different aspect, and from a different stand-point.

Ask the child, over whose sunny brow and smiling face sorrow and care have never thrown a shadow, whose voice is the voice of cheerfulness, and whose heart is the home of peace, and he will tell you, by all the joyous feelings of health which thrill through his frame, and by all the sources of pleasure that are thrown in rich profusion around him, "*Life is happiness.*"

Ask the young man, whose sensibility and whose heart have been educated under the refining influence of the intelligent and religious household. The ruggedness of whose nature maternal and sisterly influences have softened, through the power of divine truth, and whose heart has not yet experienced

the chilling influence of disappointment. He will tell you that life is love, life is hope.

The matured man, who is battling his way through the difficulties which surround him, whose brow is wrinkled with care, and whose heart is filled with anxiety, upon whose way perplexities press, and obstacles oppose, and dangers threaten, and disasters fall, he will tell you, with a voice of mingled serenity and sorrow, "Life is care and weariness."

The old man, who lives only in the past, from whose bosom repeated disappointments have driven hope, who has witnessed the depravity of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the hollowness of friendship, and the hypocrisy of the religious, and the treachery of the ungodly, with trembling voice, exclaims "vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Yet *real life* is neither happiness, nor hope, nor love, nor care and weariness, nor vanity. These are indeed accidents which belong to life, in some of its relations. But surely, we can only call *that* life, which is *real life*, and that only is real life which secures the *end* contemplated by its author, and *in the way* which he has pointed out. That way we think is pointed out in the text. It is the way of righteousness. We proceed, then, to inquire more in detail, what is real life, or in what does the reality of life consist?

1. We say *real life* is opposed to the *fictional* and *hypocritical*. These attributes are not generally

found among the young and unsophisticated. Man we regard as naturally truthful and honest. All history and observation prove this. Children and simple ones speak the truth, has passed into a proverb. It is after the child has grown into youth, and has mingled in society, that it learns, with surprise and shuddering, the deceitfulness practised in the world, and that it is tempted to practice deception in self defence. Then it is led on, step by step, as apparent advantage, or some other form of temptation presents itself, until the habit is formed.

Thus we see that life, as presented in nature, uneducated by vice, and life as presented in the character of Christ, and in the precepts of God's most Holy Word, is opposed to the deceitful and hypocritical. We have then the general principle, in the law of nature, and the law of God, and the character of Christ.

Is not the life of man, as ordinarily found in society, fictitious and hypocritical? Shame, fear, self-interest, and all those feelings, which in their nature are defensive and vindictive, urge to the concealment of the truth. Mankind undergo a kind of regular education in falsehood. From childhood to old age the lesson is taught, on the one hand, to conceal your feelings, and, on the other, to search out and ascertain the feelings and sentiments of your neighbor.

More than this, we are gravely told that it cannot

be avoided. That, if deception were not practised, the most pernicious consequences would ensue.

We are told, and the sentiment finds its confirmation and support in the mixed state of society in which we live, that many circumstances, in the ordinary affairs of life, compel us to dissemble. Shall we give offence, by expressions of disapprobation, when truth would prompt their utterance? Shall we not flatter, when we can thereby please a friend? Shall we make enemies of our friends, by telling them their faults, and shall we become our own calumniators, and thus expose ourselves, before our friends to the charge of weakness, and before our enemies to the laugh of scorn?

Is this then real life, and is this the way of righteousness? Surely no. We know that there is a time and a place for all things, and therefore also to speak the truth. Neither is the withholding of the truth always either fictitious or hypocritical.

But hear what may have transpired in your own souls, and is transpiring in the world daily. The ingenuous youth, who has only experience of his own innocence, utters the feelings of his soul, and they fall into the depository of the artful and vicious, by whom he is surrounded. Nowhere do you find such simplicity of character as to disdain the advantage of indiscreet disclosures. Nowhere do you find those with whom, what is to be seen, or heard, or told, shall pass for nothing. The inexperienced youth

discovers, ere long, that the display of his passions, and the expression of his sentiments should have been disguised. His discourse is listened to with impatience, by his less reflecting, or more vicious companions. His feelings have been wounded, and he shrinks abashed from repetition, and resolves to be wary. Scrutinizing his motives and conduct, he discovers nothing wrong. Yet, the dread of renewed scorn leads him to conceal his passions, and prohibits unrestrained effusions. He is now at the point of transition between the real and the fictitious. He may remain in silence and be innocent, but this is an unnatural condition. He is unwilling to hazard remarks which may subject him to derision, and having become bolder and more experienced, he begins to contemplate applause. All that is required is to color this particular, more highly, and to throw that into a deeper shade. By a slight deviation from the real and true, the narrative, like a picture, becomes admirable. Admiration shows how well he understood his audience. Neither scorn, nor inconvenience repel him, and he plumes himself on the advantage which his penetration has thus, so easily, obtained. The bulwark between truth and falsehood, once broken down, free scope is given to invention. The fictitious is substituted for the real, fancy for fact; and the mine, thus opened by his skill, becomes more productive, the longer it is worked. Thus is the youthful deceiver ensnared by himself.

Forsaking candor, he found in imagination what was wanting in truth, and the delusion proved grateful.

This is but one aspect of the picture of human nature and the world around us. You perceive this unreal, unnatural life, in the tricks of trade, the artifices of politicians, and in the assumed mein and aspect of godliness. You see it in the pretended sufferings, and fictitious tales of woe, of injuries, or injustice. You see it in the dress, and furniture, and equipage, and forms of salutation, and address. When, in addition to this, we consider the recommendations of truth, the injunctions, the enactments, and penalties on falsehood, the various forms of oaths, by which men are required to swear, and the dreadful sanctions annexed to the law on perjury, one would be led to suppose that we are living in a world of romance and fiction, and that this earth has been well characterized by the great English dramatist, as a stage, and all the men and women on it as mere actors. We might add, under the influence of the sentiments already presented, that they are all fictitious characters, each appearing what he is not, and enacting a play which is to close with the most solemn catastrophe the world has ever witnessed.

Yet truth is not only above all price, but is admired by all, and he who, in the midst of the fictitious and hypocritical, is found truthful and real, is held up as an "honest man, the noblest work of God."

The wisest of the heathen has said: "The shortest and surest way to live with honor, in the world, is to be, in reality, what we would appear to be: and, if we observe, we shall find that all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves, by the practice and experience of them."

2. *Real life is opposed to dream-life.* In dreaming, all the powers of the mind seem to be in active exercise, except the judgment. The most strange and fantastic tricks does fancy play, and they are regarded with the same degree of seriousness and sobriety, as though they were the most solemn acts of our lives. "The most glaring incongruities of time, the most palpable contradictions of place, and the grossest absurdities of circumstance, are most glibly swallowed by the dreamer, without the slightest dissent, or demurrage of the judgment." The moment we are wide awake, judgment resumes her seat, and we are shocked at the thought, that even in sleep, we should receive such absurdities with complacency. Dreaming is a state, in which there is neither aim nor object before the mind; and yet, in which terrible accidents occur, and fearful crimes are committed.

A large part of the human race seem to be in this dream state. They have nothing definite before them in life. They move as they are moved, either by impulses from within, or impressions from without. They have no particular rule by which their conduct

is controlled. But they are governed by those with whom they associate. At Rome, they do as the Romans, and at Athens, as the Athenians. These are the votaries of pleasure, who please, that they may be pleased, and who yield to the pressure from without, that they may dream away undisturbed the measure of life which has been allotted to them. They are as a vessel at sea, without compass, or chart, or helmsman, and, on land, the same vessel, without freight or ballast. Hundreds of young men of talents and wealth, begin life without any definite object in view, and continue it to its close. They are like corks on the ocean, driven hither and thither, at the will of the waves. Bubbles on the stream of life, buoyed up by their own levity, and admired for their form and color. Who would be a mere cork, or bubble on life's eventful tide, to be the sport of wind and wave, and the admiration of children?

There is another aspect of dream-life, in its results as unproductive of good as the former, yet, in its progress, widely different. It is the life of the imagination. The earnest desire, without the effort. The soul, filled with the prospect of all beautiful and glorious things, in the future, never to be realized. It is the child, in playful glee, chasing the butterfly, grasping here, and plunging there, to secure the wanton rover, but grasping and plunging in vain. It is the same child, weary of the fruitless chase, reclining on a grassy bank, and, with upturned eyes, gaz-

ing into the heavens, and the clouds, varied in form and color, forming a creation of its own, building cities and peopling them, giving them laws, and literature, and arts and arms.

Thus the student oftentimes, ambitious of a name, with book before him, and eye intently fixed upon his task, is led away by wanton imagination. Up the rugged steep of science first, and then through the mazes of professional preparation and professional life, she leads him. Gentle does she make the ascent, smooth the way, and strown with flowers, until the highest round of the ladder of fame has been reached, and then, as he surveys the glorious prospect, with kindling eye and swelling heart, and the sounds of praise reach his willing ear, he awakes. Alas! it was a dream; delightful indeed, but a dream! Just so much time is lost, and so much mental discipline has been forfeited, and so much food has been furnished to folly. The task before him is unaccomplished, and, in its stead, there has been a splendid vision, which has passed away into thin air. Thus, there are lofty conceptions, but no efforts to carry them into effect. Thus, pride is fostered, with nothing to sustain it. Thus, also, does the heart become polluted, through the imagination, and is prepared for evil impressions from without, and the realities of life are lost in the dreams of the passing hour.

Oftentimes the dreams of youth, strengthened by

repetition, pass over into manhood, and reach down to old age, and the dreamer then only really awakes, when he is standing on the verge of eternity, and is permitted to look back upon the way of his life, all covered with the fragments of broken vows, half-formed and abandoned resolutions, lofty conceptions, and fruitless efforts, nothing accomplished for himself, nothing for his fellow-men, nothing for his God. His dreams now pass before him in magnificent array, only to mock him, and he lies down in despair and dies, the miserable victim of his imagination.

Vividly in contrast with this picture, is the reality of life. Here there is aim, and purpose, and effect. Here there are principles of action, and they are the guides and safeguards of conduct.

If real life be found in the way of righteousness, then every one who lives in earnest, who accomplishes the end of his being, must have before him, as the governing motive to his conduct, the honor and glory of God, and the good of man. These really seem to involve one another; for, "if we love not our fellow-men, whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen."

The gifts and endowments which God has bestowed upon men, are various. To one is given wealth, to another genius, and to a third skill. The circumstances by which they are surrounded, and their occupations in life, may be equally various, yet to all who live indeed, there can be but one governing mo-

tive. It is that which, if we can ascribe to God what is applicable to man, influences him in his dealings with men. It is this which brought the Son of God from heaven, and actuated him in the labors of his life, and in the sufferings of his death. The same motive operates now, in his mediatorial work, as he sits at the right hand of the throne of God, governing the affairs of the universe; and he will have all men to be influenced by the same governing motive, that all his intelligent creation may be one with him, and all may labor together to promote the same great end.

All men cannot pursue the same avocation, because it is the will of God, indicated by the existence of society, which is his creature, that men should pursue different employments, inasmuch as the necessities of society are various. One man selects agricultural pursuits, as the field of his labors, influenced by the desire to do the most good, and from a well grounded conviction that his own predilections and the great object of life, can thus be best promoted by him. Another, influenced by similar motives, becomes a merchant, and another a mechanic, a third a physician, lawyer, or divine. Now these avocations, and many other modifications of these, seem to be necessary to the highest good of society. All can promote the glory of God and the good of man, in a high degree. The physician and the lawyer may be influenced by as pure and lofty motives,

as the divine. The merchant, the mechanic and farmer have nothing in their pursuits which will, necessarily, reflect any inferiority on them. Why should not the lawyer at the bar, the physician at the bedside of his patient, the mechanic at his workshop, the merchant in his counting room, and the farmer in his field, glorify God and benefit man equally with the divine in the sacred desk. Must all christian virtues be confined to the pulpit, or centre in the persons of the ministers of the gospel? Shall not love to God and love to man, the fulfilling of the whole law, be found equally in the other walks of life? Shall not intelligent piety, purity, justice, mercy, truth, disinterested benevolence, patience, resignation, faith, hope and joy, dwell in the heart, and characterize the life of others, as well as those who minister in holy things? Assuredly! Let not men then suppose, that the glory of God and the good of man must not be the object of their lives, because they are not divines; or that they can indulge in pleasures and violate duties which are forbidden to others, because others are divines.

Real life requires us all to be divine. To dwell in God, and God in us. To be filled with his fullness, that we all may be one, as the Father and the Son are one. To see men animated by such a spirit, would be to realize something of heaven come down to earth. Such a spirit, and such motives to action, would be the destruction of party spirit in

church and state, of slavery, of intemperance, profanity, Sabbath desecration, impurity and licentiousness in every form. Petty envy and jealousy, ill-will, malice, hatred, variance, strife, slander and falsehood in every form, could not exist in such an atmosphere. This would be real life, the life of God in the soul. This would be an earnest life, for the constraining power of the love of Christ would be upon us. It would pervade every thought, and fill every avenue to the soul. It would nerve every purpose to do good, with a resistless energy, and it would urge forward to their execution, with an impulse which would bear down all opposition. Thus would men become both good and great, and the measure of their greatness would be the degree and quality of their goodness. Here there is no leisure for dreaming, or the play of the imagination.

The pilgrim is on the road, with staff and scrip and sandals, steadily, faithfully, perseveringly pursuing his way. Flowers are blooming on either hand, in richest colors, and flinging their odors on the breeze, but he heeds them not. Sweetest music steals upon his ravished ear, but it stays not his progress. His purpose is formed, his heart is fixed, his affections are at home where all his friends are assembled and waiting for him, and thither his unwavering steps are bent. No power may turn him back, he is in earnest.

The warrior is engaged in the midst of the con-

flict. His enemies surround him on every side. He must be watchful and courageous, or he is lost. He listens not to parley. He has no time to bestow upon amusements. He is engaged in a warfare from which there is no release. He must either conquer or die. Before him is the prize, a glittering crown, endless life, eternal glory. Behind him, defeat, shame and everlasting contempt. In the midst of such influences, pressing from every side, he must be in earnest. He feels the reality of life, and secures the end of his being.

He, then, whose life is real, is earnestly engaged in doing good to his fellow-men, and thereby is glorifying God. The injury and the injustice, and the insult, which others bestow upon him, have not power sufficient to turn him away from his purpose unto revenge, however much that may be in accordance with the course of the world, for his purpose is fixed.

Intimately connected with the proper object of life, and of equal importance, are well ascertained and established principles of right and wrong. Dream life is one of passion and impulse and imagination, of ease and gratification; real life is a life of principle. We mean by principle, an invariable rule of conduct. A principle may be wrong, or it may be right, yet, whether wrong or right, it is gratifying to know the position which a man occupies, in reference to the engrossing topics of the day, so that, in any emergency, we are not deceived in him. Much more

important is it for the man himself, in his relations to God and his fellow-men, to have fixed principles and correct principles. These, on the one hand, are a guide to conduct him on the right way, and, on the other, a wall of defence, to shield him from evil.

To the principle of civil and religious liberty, which, for many years, was unfolding and developing itself in England, and which has found its congenial soil and climate in this land, do we owe the blessings, social and civil, which we now enjoy. The heroes of our Revolution, and the heroes of the Reformation were governed by this principle. No power of gold, no power of sentiment, or physical force, could shake it, or seduce them from under its influence. Thus was the principle of love to Christ, the impelling and controlling power in the soul of the Apostle Paul. It bore him aloft, far above selfish or worldly motives. He regarded "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, by whom the world was crucified to him, and he to the world." It bore him forward in the race of usefulness, so that he outstripped his fellow Apostles, and could say that he was not a whit behind the very chief.

The gospel of the grace of God has reduced, into a very short summary, and easily to be comprehended and remembered, the principles of real life, viz: "Love to God supreme, love to our fellow-men as to ourselves. Whatever ye do whether ye eat or drink,

do all to the glory of God. Do to others, as ye would that they should do to you." These are the principles inculcated by the great teacher, who spake as never man spake, and practiced by him, whose life is the admiration of angels and of men. These influence the christian gentleman, and are to him an adequate substitute for all arbitrary laws and enactments.

3. *Real life is opposed to the idle and the useless.* The idle and the useless are sufficiently distinguished from the hypocritical and the dreaming, to constitute a separate topic of discussion. There are, indeed, points of resemblance and contact, which cannot be conveniently avoided.

There are, in every community, those who add neither utility to matter, nor advantage to the soul. Who do not really live, but vegetate. Fungi they are upon the body of society, exhausting its energies, and impeding its progress. Drones they are, in the hive politic and ecclesiastic; parasites, turning themselves around the pillars of church and state. They may be aptly classified under the heads of *physical*, *intellectual*, and *spiritual* loungers.

The *physical* loungeur you will see at the corners of the streets, in the taverns and other places of public resort, wandering from shop to shop, looking into a newspaper here, and opening a book there, and wearing a face as grave and wise, and twirling his cane, as officially, as if he were adjusting and directing the

affairs of the nation. The physical loungeur, like a London policeman, has his regular walks and beats, and therefore, may be found at any particular hour of the day. Nomadic in his habits, this species is gregarious, and, whilst he may oftentimes be distinguished by his size, more frequently he is known by the drafts, the dice, and the cards.

The *intellectual loungeur* is one who makes pretensions to literature, and professes to be a critic in all kinds of composition; whose taste it might be dangerous to question, and whose indignant scorn is glaring as the meteor, and as harmless. He is to be found, either in the parlor, or what he calls his study. He reads, as whim or fancy may direct, not for profit, but pleasure. He reads and thinks not. His intellectual stomach is overloaded with food of all kinds, for he is a gross feeder, and what wonder then, if he become a dispeptic. What wonder, if the organ of the system, which receives and distributes the nourishment to the different parts, become deranged, that the whole system become deranged. The consequence of such a state of things is, that the whole nervous system passes over into an abnormal state. The real passes over into the ideal. The man is in an imaginary world, and, whilst in it, he may have his conflicts and his trials, yet he really is a blank in the creation of God. It is to be regretted, that so many men of real talents, who, by a proper mental training, would become ornaments to society,

and benefactors to their race, become literary loungers early in life. Instead of taxing their energies, and strengthening their mental powers, and improving their opportunities, they waste the one and enfeeble the other. Habits of idleness, thus formed early in life, and strengthened by use, become rigid and immovable. Life is made up of a series of trifling and useless acts, and death closes a career of sinful neglect, with the gloomy prospect of a mournful eternity.

The *spiritual loungeur* possesses the general characteristics of the species already mentioned, and differs from others specifically in this, that his idleness and unprofitableness appear in his spiritual interests, and that of his fellow-men. In other words, his soul, in its moral interests, is neglected. Individuals belonging to this class, are necessarily professed christians, and are found in all conditions, from the preacher in the pulpit, down to the least assuming in the church. But how shall they be characterized? What an inconsistency in terms; spiritual loungeur! Here you have the idle and the unprofitable, connected with the interests of the soul. How large the class! Effort is necessary, to strengthen and develop the christian graces, and it is not put forth. Indolence and repose, the natural state of man, are preferred. The force of habit and conscience produce a forced attention to the means of grace, but the attendance is only that of a loungeur.

There is no reality in effort, or profit. It is an aimless, heartless, profitless exercise. Thus it is, even in the preparation and performances of the sacred desk, in the visits of the family, and of the sick. The effect of all this is, that spiritual life sickens and dies. Lofty aspirations are driven away, by the angry puffs of passion. The individual becomes sensual, selfish and wicked. Thus is the church injured, the blessed Redeemer wounded in the house of his friends, and all iniquity rejoices. The only course of safety for the physical, intellectual and spiritual man is, to be industrious and useful.

"He who marks from day to day,
In generous acts his radiant way,
Treads the same path the Savior trod,
The path to glory and to God."

5. The last aspect of this subject, which I propose to present to you, is real life, as opposed to the perishable. Real life, then, is imperishable. It stretches beyond the limits of time and sense, away into the boundless eternity. This whole life, in its ordinary acceptation, has been called a dream. All its occupations and relations, in this sense, are unreal. Thus has our blessed Lord taught us, when he said, "call no man your Father upon the earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your master, even Christ." "In the resurrection, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

"Behold they are my mother and brethren who do the will of my father in heaven."

All existing social relations, therefore, are but temporary, and are yielding to the influence of that real life which came down from heaven. The world itself, which is now the object of our senses, is but a shifting scene. Each day presents its acts and scene and then passes away forever. The fashion of this world is passing away. All forms of matter pass away, never to return in the same relations. Kingdoms, nations, forms of society, fashions, wealth, beauty, fame, power, the earth itself, with all that men so ardently love, and so eagerly pursue, must pass away. Even faith and hope shall pass away. But the soul, and that which is the object of faith and hope, bound to the throne of God by indissoluble ties, and resting upon the rock of ages, can never pass away. The word and the promise of God, which are our confidence, cannot pass away. Truth, holiness, justice, humility and love must abide long as the throne of God and he who sits upon it, for they are the foundations of that throne.

In this imperfect state, the real and the unreal come together, and are mingled, as are the good and the evil. The separation will take place, only when the end has been accomplished for which this earth was formed. Now, the soul, properly instructed, seeks after the real and imperishable. This is found in the way of righteousness. But left to itself, with-

out the lessons of the great teacher, it loves the unreal, the object only of sense. How do our affections attach themselves to the material and the sensible. We love our friends and relatives, but it is their bodies which we love. We love the graceful form, and the beauty of the face, the color and the features and the expression. We gaze into the eye, as though we would penetrate into its most profound recesses. We would see the soul, and we cannot. Then we cling to the body, and when God calls their spirits into the real and eternal, how we cling to the perishable body, with our material notions, and employ language as if the body were the beloved one. Thus we become attached to the house, the farm, the woodland and the water, and call them after our own names. Out of this material world, God would lead us, to the invisible and real.

We labor here, in this mixed state of things in which our lot is cast, with the glory of God and the good of man as our object, animated by the constraining love of the real, viz, a better world. If then we would really live, we must set our affection on things above. The soul will be regarded as of infinite value. Thought, feeling, sentiment, principle, and all the relations of the soul to time and eternity, will claim supreme attention. This will constitute the beginning of real life. Thus commencing, and building upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cor-

ner stone, there will grow up a glorious temple unto the Lord. It will be a habitation for the ever blessed Spirit. Having its incipency here, it will have its perfection under better and more enduring influences. The earthly house of this tabernacle will indeed be dissolved and pass away, but, out of the perishable material, there will rise up, in new form and beauty, the imperishable and the eternal. Mortal shall put on immortality, corruption incorruption, the material the spiritual, and death and disease, and pain and sorrow, and sin shall be swallowed up in victory. The material, the sensible, the perishable, the fictitious shall pass over into the real, and then will begin a new cycle for the believer, as for the unbeliever, and the termination of that cycle we cannot calculate. To the one, there will be the reality of all that imagination, aided by faith and hope could conceive, and to the other, the reality of all that fancy could frame of the terrible in suffering and sorrow, aided by the terrors which a guilty conscience and the denunciations of God's holy law can inspire.

In conclusion, my young friends, gathering up the broken fragments of this subject, as they are presented to us in this discussion, let us derive from them the lessons of wisdom they were intended to impart.

Learn that there is a life which is an earnest and real thing; which is lifted up and exalted far above all that is fictitious and dreamlike, and idle and perishable, and *that* life is found in the way of righte-

ousness. It begins its course here, and pursues it humbly, patiently and perseveringly, marking its way through the fertile fields and desert sands of this world, by generous acts and deeds of benevolence.

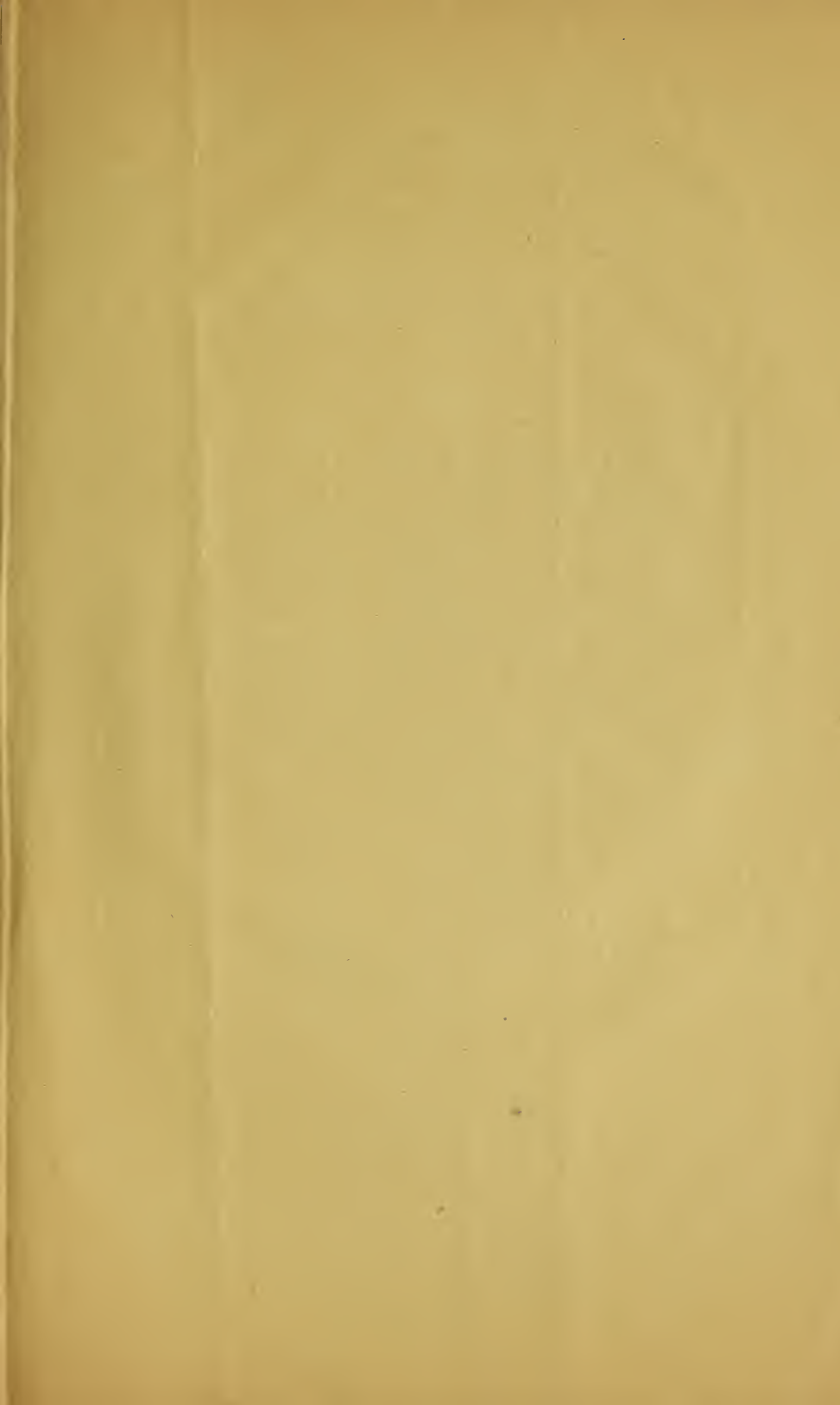
See the sparkling rill which gushes from the mountain-side, and pursues its peaceful course to the ocean. Humbly, yet joyfully, it flows along, dispensing blessings as it goes. Now it sparkles in the sunbeams, and now with sombre willows and tangled grass is covered o'er, now it leaps with shouts the precipice, and anon, around the base of some huge rock, it wends its way, and, as it passes o'er rocky bed and fertile plain, and sandy desert, still blessing as it goes, its power increases, and its influence widens,—for he who blesses others is blessed again in turn,—until, traversing kingdoms and encircling continents, and bearing on its mighty bosom blessings for all, with mighty shouts of joy, it ends its course in the vast ocean whose huge waves return the joyful shouts responsive.

Thus, real life, walking in the footsteps of the great teacher, is radiant with noble deeds, until it is lost in the eternal blessedness of the righteous. Pursue this life with undeviating steps, and let not fictitious fairy tales, or the dreams of a diseased imagination lead you astray. Permit not idleness, and her twin sister, vice, to detain you by the way; the work of life is too great, and the time too short, to justify delay. Use the perishable, as not abusing it,

and make it tributary to the great end of life, the glory of God and the good of man.

Go then, my young friends,

“Life is before ye ;—and as now ye stand,
 Eager to spring upon the promised land,
 Fair smiles the way, where yet your feet have trod,
 But few light steps, upon a flowery sod ;
 Round ye are youth’s green bowers—and to your eyes,
 Tho’ horizon’s line but joints the earth and skies,
 Daring and triumph, pleasure, fame and joy,
 Friendship unwavering, love without alloy,
 Brave thoughts of noble deeds and glory won,
 Like angels, beckon ye to venture on.
 Life is before ye ;—from the fated road
 Ye cannot ; turn then, take ye up the load,
 Not yours to tread, or leave the unknown way,
 Ye must go o’er it, meet ye what ye may.
 Gird up your souls within you to the deed,
 Angels and fellow-spirits bid ye speed ;
 What, though the brightness wane, the pleasure fade,
 The glory dim : Oh not of these is made
 The awful life that to your trust is given,
 Children of God ; inheritors of Heaven !”



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